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BULLETIN

DECEMBER, 1944

The Child Welfare Field *What is Expected in Today's Total Program?**

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Have We a Program of Social Work?

IN speaking of "today's total program," by which I assume we refer to today's program of social work in America, there is one implication which requires brief examination at the outset, because it gives one clear clue both to the importance and to the difficulty of answering the question we have set up for discussion. What is that program? Is there, in actual fact, anything that can rightly be called a "total program of social work" in America today? Is there anything like a planned, concerted effort to attain deliberately chosen goals by deliberately selected steps and processes, each one related in scope and method to all the rest and to the other forces of social change, of social construction and reconstruction, that are at work around us?

There is, of course, a vast amount of social work being done. Most of it is directed, furthermore, to one general purpose, which does give a thread of unity to it all, the purpose of making the world a better place to live in and of helping people to find satisfaction and achievement in the world in which they live. Much of it, too, is being done by the systematic application of technical knowledge and skill, which helps it to find its mark in people's lives. But can it be called a program? Does it have the kind of clarity and consistency which enables its sponsors and practitioners—much less the world at large—to know what it is up to, what it can and cannot do, how

it fits into the pattern of social help and social change that is taking form under the impact of events and through the conscious and unconscious strivings of all sorts of people everywhere?

Lack of Common Concepts in Social Work

One is reminded of the small schoolboy's definition of a great city. He said it was "a large body of strangers, living close together, entirely surrounded by noise and dirt, usually going in different directions in a great hurry." I am not sure that an observer on Mars, turning his telescope toward today's social work activities in America, might not describe our efforts in much the same terms—a large number of organizations, working side by side, somewhat shrouded in rather confusing philosophic fogs, doing many different things in many different ways, driven by powerful and conflicting inner motivations

and by terrific external pressures of time and circumstance, without a clear picture of specific individual goals, much less of common ones, and without a very discriminating choice of the roads and the next steps to be taken to reach whatever ends they do see ahead.

There is nothing particularly discreditable in that situation, viewed in historical perspective. Social work is relatively young, as a self-conscious, organized movement. It is not surprising that it has not achieved complete clarity of purpose, definition of its own task and its true place in the world, or full unity of guiding principle. But in a moment of history as

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* Condensed from a paper read at the New England Regional Conference of the Child Welfare League of America, at Greenfield, Massachusetts, April 1944.

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significant as this one, as full of conflict, as inviting to the release of every latent prejudice and separate interest, as deeply in need of sure-footed leadership and efficient technical performance of every common, essential service, our lack of a common concept of our own role, of our own capacities, and of our common program, is nothing less than a tragedy. It is an unhappy reminder of the state in which we were caught at the beginning of the depression in the thirties, when we were apparently unprepared either to define or to assume the responsibilities which our experience in helping people out of trouble should have equipped us to discharge.

Indeed, there is another significant parallel in the situation we then faced and the one we face today, which underscores the seriousness of our problem. We were suddenly catapulted then, almost against our will, out of the relative seclusion and security of a limited service to a limited group of clients, who were somewhat set apart, and for the most part out of sight, from the great body of citizens of our communities. We were plunged into the very center of the social scene, where we were called upon to serve not an isolated segment but a cross section of all the people. What we did and the way we did it was no longer only our own private professional concern, or that of a few interested and informed citizens associated with us, but of all members of every community. Today, even more clearly and emphatically than then, we are operating in the white light of an alert, wide public interest and knowledge; we are serving folks who never before have felt the slightest need of our ministrations; we have even been designated by the highest authority as "essential" to the fulfillment of the universal need and purpose of our whole people. The degree and the way we relate ourselves and our agencies to the basic interests and feelings and needs of these people will certainly determine for years to come the way they feel toward social work and social workers, the demands they make upon us, the opportunities they open to us, the participation they invite or permit us to have in the great common effort of realizing the good life for all.

We cannot, of course, conjure up a total unified program over night, where none in fact exists, nor can each of us wait until such a program has come into being before undertaking to find our own place and to do our own part in the world as it is. But the very lack of such a defined and integral program in social work does impose upon each of us, upon each field of service within this potential whole, a special responsibility. Not only must we mark out for ourselves our own place in the total social work scheme of things

in order to make sure that we are doing with the utmost of proficiency what now needs to be done within the specific area of our own technical service; we must also find our own place in the total social setting within which we operate. We have to come to terms with our times, each for himself, if we are not able to do it all together.

What Tasks in Behalf of Children?

It is perfectly obvious that a special obligation rests upon the child welfare field at this juncture of affairs. This is not only because the children of the world, for whom we labor, have a peculiar stake in the solution of the world's present problems, and are peculiarly sensitive victims of its disorders and confusions. It is not only because of the peculiar stake which the world holds in its children, as the very substance of the future. It is also because, as a matter of practical and insistent fact, the social protection and care of children reach out into and are bound up with every social institution and relationship—the family, the school, the church, the law, the economic system, the whole vast network of cultural influences which constitute the basic structure of modern society. The child is near the focus of every dynamic interest and effort of the whole community.

To state that fact is to disclose the first element in the answer to that question we are asking ourselves in this discussion. We cannot expect of ourselves, nor will others expect of us, that we in social work shall take over this whole problem. We cannot possess the problem of the child as the community sees and feels it. We can only share it; we can be a part, not the whole, of the structure which society will use to protect and serve its children. Our first task, therefore, is to determine for ourselves, and to make clear to others, what particular aspects of the problem of childhood we are equipped to do something about and how we propose to go about doing that part of the total job, and then to get at those defined and limited tasks with all the understanding and skill we can muster.

Cooperation with Related Services Essential

Our second task is to enter into the closest possible cooperative relations, on the basis of the fullest possible mutual understanding of functions and methods, with all those who are at work in adjoining and sometimes overlapping areas of service within the framework of social work itself, thus bringing into effective collaboration and integrated usefulness, all the different and specialized insights and skills developed out of different and specialized experience.

Our third task is to contribute to the common pool of knowledge and feeling upon which the community draws in the process of choosing its own goals for children and in formulating its own plans for them. Our understanding of children, of their needs and their reactions to those needs, of the conditions prerequisite to the fulfillment of need, is derived from a kind of responsible, creative experience with them which is unique in its depth and breadth, in its nature and quality. The community is entitled to a chance to avail itself of that specific source of understanding, different from any other at its disposal, and we are obligated to give them that chance.

And, finally, our fourth task is to follow through, into vigorous, persistent collaboration with all those elements of the community that are directly and actively concerned with the welfare of children, in the formulation, acceptance and execution of those plans and policies that are essential to the attainment of these ends.

Before attempting to analyze briefly some of the factors involved in the fulfillment of each of these tasks, I would like to suggest some of the basic considerations that govern our performance of them all.

Basic Human Problems—Democracy's Concern

In the first place, it is obvious that this war is overwhelmingly significant in its effect upon human beings and all the social factors in their lives. It is overpowering in the strength and scope of the forces of change it has unleashed—both of destruction and, potentially at least, of progress and reconstruction. Especially profound perhaps are its external and psychological influences, both positive and negative, upon children. It is painfully trite, and perhaps wholly superfluous, to observe that it demands of us all, and particularly of those who accept professional responsibility for helping people to find their way through this labyrinthine maze of conflict and confusion, an alertness to change, a flexibility and resilience of spirit, a capacity for growth and movement in ourselves, a willingness to enter upon new paths and to see the world in new terms, which the piping times of peace never demanded of us and may even have dulled and deadened in many of us.

But there is a danger, a threat to responsible performance, in this very compelling concentration upon the new and different and exciting circumstances that press in upon us in such a crisis. There is a temptation to allow ourselves to be swept along in the flash floods that rise around us, to feel only the vast transformations that are coming upon us and to respond only to

the perils they disclose. It is of supreme importance that we shall realize, and shall act in disciplined fashion, upon the concept that this war, with all its explosive violence, all its uncertainties and anxieties, all its pervasive and disruptive power, is not the be-all and end-all of human living even at this hour; that it has not overthrown and invalidated all past experience nor terminated all past problems; that it has not transformed basic human nature; that, in fact, the specific problems it creates, for individuals and for the community, are not wholly new and unheard of problems. Rather, they are intensifications, complications, new manifestations, of the common, continuous, universal problems that have plagued men's souls from the beginning of time, and with which we have been struggling, in helping people out of trouble, over generations. Few of us, in real truth, are now encountering anything essentially new in the practical problems with which human beings are beset in this war-torn world, or in the way they are striving to cope with them in their tangled feelings, minds and wills, nor yet in the way they can be helped and in the conditions that make it possible for them to use help.

Not only are the problems essentially the same. The same profound respect for the "uncommon fitness of the common man," the same restrained but dynamic use of one's own resources in helping others find their own strength to command their own lives—that is to say, the same pervasive philosophy and the same cooperative method and disciplined skill—are still the essence of our responsibility, the foundation of our practice and the key to the ultimate answer to our own, our clients' and our communities' problems. Continuity and stability of established services are just as important elements in our response to present needs, as are imaginative, creative, forward movement into new channels of service.

There is a second basic consideration related to this first one. It is perfectly clear that there is an upsurge, a revival, a new ferment, of democracy in the midst of this world struggle for survival. There is a new sense of the worth and dignity of individual personality, of the right to individuality and difference and selfhood. At its core, and in its highest estate, social work has embodied and lived democracy with peculiar strength and consistency in its own practical operations. But the problems of democracy are not solved, either in social work or anywhere else along the whole social front. Those problems are the same everywhere—how to preserve and use individual difference in relation to standardization; how to reconcile freedom with authority; how to integrate

specialism, expertness, leadership, with majority rule, involving ultimate control by the inexpert.

In these broad general statements of the problem are imbedded our own daily puzzles, our relations with obstreperous, ignorant, willful clients; the relations of professional staff to lay boards; the problems of functional definition, limitation and cooperation of different agencies, and all the rest. Furthermore, the very heart of our job, viewed in its larger context, is to individualize the impact of social institutions, rules and standards, upon the individual people to whose welfare they are addressed, to realize and enrich the democratic life, through replenishing its strength at its source, in the infinite reservoir of different capacities and experiences of all its individual members. Whether we know it or want it or not, we are destined to play an enormously significant part in making this new democratic impulse live and work.

If we are to play a valid and useful part in this process, we must make this concept of democracy absolutely our own, in practice as well as in theory. And this involves a number of difficult, but indispensable, conditions. We must accept and act in every relation upon the clear recognition that we are helpers, not masters; that in a democracy the expert must always be on tap, never on top; that the right to reject advice and help is the converse of the right to accept. Above all, it is essential that the process of help, whether it be of individual clients, or of colleagues, or of communities, must be one which makes it always possible for those who are needing and asking help to know what help is available, the terms upon which it is available, and the responsibilities and consequences which acceptance of help, under these terms, entails. On no other basis is any one free to make his own choices, to command his own conduct, to select and fulfill his own part in the common life, in short, to be a self-sustaining and contributing factor in a democratic society.

DEFINITION OF CHILD WELFARE FIELD

Now we may turn more specifically to the question before us and to the four tasks we have defined. The definition of the sphere of the child welfare field in relation to the broader reaches of the problems of childhood, around which are focused many of the organized efforts of all social work and of the whole community, cannot be achieved in a short space. But certain aspects of it should be noted. We have fortunately lived through and left behind the time when the child welfare field in social work could be described in terms of service to the so-called "dependent, defective and delinquent" children. Those categories,

we now realize, raised barriers which we have long since tried to batter down. They described service in terms of kinds of people, labeled in a way that was neither suitable nor acceptable to them, to ourselves, or to those who shared with us some responsibility for serving them. But we have not entirely lived down or effectually removed the stigma which those classifications attached to our service and to our beneficiaries.

Can We Assume Total Responsibility?

One of the most disturbing aspects of those old labels, which lingers on to cloud a clear concept of what we really do and want to do today, is the sense they conveyed that if a child fell into one of these categories, actually or technically, he fell into our hands wholly and irrevocably, for the time being at least. If it was our job to deal with the dependent child, it was the whole child, because he was "dependent," for whom we accepted accountability. That had two implications which were bad. In the first place, it implied an omniscience and omnipotence on our part which was never true to the fact, and which violated the personalities of all who were involved in the process, whether child or adult. In the second place, it identified the service of child welfare agencies with a particular part of the community, confined those agencies to a service relationship only with a group that was assumed to be inherently different from the rest, and shut agencies and workers off from the opportunity to deal with the welfare of children as a part of the normal social process in the whole normal community.

The antidote to that slow and lingering poison, it seems to me, is to describe the child welfare field in terms of problems, services, and processes. The problems of behavior, of social dislocation, of economic inadequacy, of health, can be matched by the services of child guidance, placement, adoption, counsel, relief and medical care, either singly or in combination. So defined, the child welfare field makes itself available, not to take over responsibility for all of living from those with whom it normally, rightfully, and inevitably rests, but only to help them face and meet a problem. It is equally accessible, without cloud or stigma, to any member of the community. It becomes equally acceptable, also, because it leaves each free to accept or to reject what is offered, without entrusting one's whole life to the control of another. Furthermore, it limits the agency's claims of capacity and responsibility to that which it can perform. It encourages alert awareness of new problems

(Continued on page 12)

The Children In Day Time Care*

Alice T. DASHIELL

IF we are honest with ourselves in the year 1944, after three years of planning, organizing and operating day care services, we must admit that pretty generally we have not kept the child for whom the services exist as the focus of our activities. We have made an honest effort in this country to meet a serious emergency resulting from the employment of young mothers in industry. Our desks are buried under statistical reports from industry, the War Manpower Commission, from community surveys, all indicating trends in the employment of women and the estimated number of their children who need or will soon need some form of day care service. Our telephone wires hum constantly with interagency communications regarding day care plans. We spend hours in community conferences determining whose responsibility it is to develop and administer day care services. We fill speaking engagements, interview the press, make radio broadcasts to interpret, recruit, and advertise. Foster family homes and child care centers are established.

The Personnel Problem

Personnel is recruited and placed on the job in centers. We find it a problem to secure a sufficient number. Personnel qualifications are loosely defined. There is no standard for salaries and work hours; no job security. We argue about the desirable ratio of children in a center to the number of teachers, group workers and assistants responsible for their care.

Health, Education and Case Work

Few day care programs include adequate health safeguards for children and staff. The shortage of civilian physicians tends to discourage us from requiring essential information about the physical condition of children accepted for day time care. Educators stress the importance of developmental programs for children. Social workers are concerned with the problem of supplying adequate case work service in child care centers and with safeguarding the placement of children in family day care homes. With social agency staffs depleted and often overtaxed, we accept the community's opinion that case work is not essential to adequate day care service; and that the parents of children accepted for day care service do not need case workers because they are financially independent people who can make decisions about placement, and

carry the major responsibility for it and for integrating the child's experiences at home with those in foster home or the child care center—or possibly we do not even consider that aspect as important.

Financing Day Care

Federal provision for day care service is part of an omnibus appropriation for community facilities and is limited to one type of group care. Few communities have been ready to appropriate sufficient public funds for child care. Private funds raised are inadequate to meet the needs of children in wartime.

Inadequate Interpretation of Children's Needs

Center directors and program administrators complain of slow enrollment to capacity in center, rapid turnover of center population or foster family day care placements. Industry is disappointed in child care services as a major solution to the womanpower problem and employee absenteeism. We have constructed few buildings for use as centers. It has seemed necessary to use available plants often unsuited to the purpose. We are reluctant, for a variety of reasons, to campaign for family day care homes. We say that visiting homemaker service is generally out of the question because of expense; or that salaries paid homemakers cannot compete with those offered such women by war plants and that therefore they cannot be recruited. Many children are placed for full time care because there are no suitable facilities available for day time care. The number of poor standard commercial child care facilities and of haphazard independent placements of children for both day care and full time care are increasing rapidly.

Where Are the Children in This Picture?

It is with the intention of focusing our attention and concerns chiefly upon them that the following impressions of case material are presented.

Mrs. Torrence offered herself as a foster day care mother in response to a radio appeal. Her home was approved and licensed after a visit by a case worker from the day care agency. Three references were seen. The family physician certified that Mrs. Torrence was in good health, but he was unaware that her niece was living in the home and no physical examination was required of her. Later the agency learned that she was attending a chest clinic and that her chest X-rays indicated early tuberculosis.

* From a paper delivered at [National Conference, Cleveland, May 1944.

Three weeks after this home was approved, Mrs. Green telephoned the agency to inquire about day care placement. Mr. Green had been inducted into Army service a few days previously and she had secured a job in the shipyard. It seemed urgent that the only child, a boy of 11 months be placed for day time care. The plan was discussed with Mrs. Green in the agency office where she was given the address of Mrs. Torrence and a suggestion that she pay her a fee of \$1.00 daily. There was no arrangement for a complete physical examination of the baby. The agency saw neither Mr. Green, or Mr. Torrence, who disapproved of his wife's plan to care for children. Both women were tense and unsure of the future of this plan. There was a single contact between the agency and the mother, the mother and the day care home prior to the baby's placement.

We may reconstruct this material in terms of the child's experience and with him as the central figure in the picture.

Johnnie wakes up one morning with much the same kind of feeling he has known since he first became aware of the pattern on the wallpaper, the texture of his crib blanket, and that before breakfast spasm of hunger. He is a bit taken aback by the speed with which his mother pulls him from the warm nest. He hasn't had time to cry a bit as the signal for food. Mother looks different too. She is wearing a hat and her dress buttons are hard. No soft wrapper to snuggle against this morning. Her voice isn't warm either. What's this? Clean diaper, romper suit, snow suit! Where's breakfast? The cold air feels most unpleasant and makes his eyes water. The hunger pain hurts. He howls. Mother squeezes him uncomfortably as she bends to enter the car. There are several strange women inside. One of them gets cigarette smoke in his eye. The other pats his bewildered head and makes cooing sounds. The car starts with a lurch and he hears mother sigh as she settles him on her unflexed knees and wipes his wet cheeks. He has stopped howling. The breath is a bit knocked out of him by all the commotion and being squeezed. There, that spasm in his center again. Where is breakfast? He sees a bottle protruding from mother's bag on the car floor and tries to reach it. Just then motion stops and mother bends again squeezing him across the chest, his legs dangling. The cold air makes his eyes water. There is another strange woman up on that porch. She holds out her arms, and—horrors—mother hands him over. The strange woman puts him on her hip, takes the bottles from mother. They talk. Mother kisses him on his nose and wipes it hastily. "Be a good boy Johnnie." The woman smiles and says something, then puts him down on a strange sofa with a prickly cover, and pulls off his leggings. The front door bangs. Mother's gone. No breakfast. The woman doesn't hold him the same way as mother. Her voice is louder, but she smiles and holds her face close to his. He feels frightened. This morning isn't all right. He

stiffens and screams. The woman struggles. He refuses to bend. "There now, there now." Soon a nipple is pushed into his mouth. He pushes it out with his tongue. Usually he likes the warm, sweetish taste of his bottle but this morning he doesn't want it. He wants mother and the old wrapper and the roses on the wall paper and a game of peek. He howls. That strange feeling of hurt inside seems to swell. He twists his head from side to side to get away from it and the bottle held before him. The strange woman sighs. For a lifetime she sits there, moves about, picks him up. He is changed, laid in a crib with sides different from his. The wall paper is striped. A new rattle makes a curious sound. He throws it on the floor and whimpers. Surely mother will come now. Horror again! The strange woman's face! Sobs shake him all over. He feels her tuck him in, patting his back. Sleep. Another awakening. Hunger. The strange woman's face. Another bottle. A little seems enough. A lifetime of sitting in a strange pen with a cool shiny bottom. There are several things he wants to pull and touch. All out of reach. He aches inside. There is a good deal of dampness and frequent changes. The strange woman's hands are steady and a little comforting. She sighs. Then the door. It's dark outside, Mother at last. He snuggles against her rough coat and sleeps in her arms all the way home. The strange woman says he's a good little fellow but he just won't eat. The episode is repeated the next day and the next. Pretty soon its an old story, and he learns to know that the strange woman is something like mother, but the cold drive in the morning disturbs him and he is less interested in his first bottle. The bang of the front door is frightening. He never gets used to sitting alone in the carriage on the back porch. Mother used to take him on joggling rides in his buggy. He could watch her face and she talked to him all the way to the store and back. Sometimes there were crackers to suck and a bit of play after going inside before the bath. There used to be a man with a big deep voice and an arm so firm and supporting that with him a fall never seemed imminent. The strange woman has no one like that at her house. She never holds his face against her cheek, laughing when he pulls her hair, but sometimes he wants to stay with her and doesn't like the ride home when he is sleepy and the cigarette smoke blows in his eyes. Mother's voice sounds different now as though she were going to pick him up too quickly. He feels cross and sleep at the wrong times.

Johnnie cannot know what might have been done to help him through such an experience. All he knows is that the situation does not feel right.

In an interview with the case worker two months later, Mrs. Green was able to discuss the arrangement and her reasons for wishing to move the baby from the day care home. The two homes were some distance apart, necessitating transportation by automobile after early rising each morning. The mother had made her own financial arrangements with the foster mother and hesitated to seek further contact with the

agency, although she was not altogether satisfied with Mrs. Torrence's charge of \$10 a week, or with this foster mother's ability to handle the baby's feeding difficulty. Mrs. Green felt that she was expected to carry responsibility for the plan since she had initiated it. Sometimes when the day care mother was critical about his condition in the morning, and complained that he refused food during the day, she wished that the agency responsible for selecting this home would help her explain why she could not do more. The agency did seem to understand that a working mother needs a day care service, but plunging into this plan with them she felt left alone in it. So did the foster mother. Sometimes Mrs. Green wondered about emergencies. If the baby should become ill during the day, what did she know of the foster mother's physician? Would he come in time? Why had she not left the name of her own doctor? He might be away on the other side of town when needed. She had not thought to explain to him what such a call might mean or why the baby was in a day care home. Perhaps she ought to discuss this with the agency, but then they seemed to expect her to do any further planning necessary to the baby's care. He was her child after all.

There had been so little time to think about it in terms of the effect upon the child. She often wondered if the abrupt change in his schedule and leaving him so suddenly with a strange woman could be the reason for his apparent upset. He had always been such a contented, healthy baby except when taken on visits and handled by relatives and friends. Then he showed symptoms like the present ones, crying a good deal, wetting himself more frequently, refusing food, and having disturbed sleep. She wondered if perhaps she should not have taken a job but it seemed too late to do anything about that now. Her weekly pay envelope made it possible to keep the house and the furniture just as it was before her husband left. Otherwise she and the baby would have found it necessary to go back to his family. She felt certain that neither of them would have been happy there. Even though separated during the day the baby seemed more hers than if she had been obliged to share him with numerous aunts and cousins.

The agency was finding it difficult to recruit day care homes particularly in the area where Mrs. Green lived. They had hesitated to recommend this placement because of the distance and travel involved. The mother had described him as a healthy, happy child of 11 months who would not mind the trip and the change. The physician's O.K. slip sent in after the single interview indicated that his condition was

satisfactory. He had been vaccinated and immunized against diphtheria. Actually the agency had no way of matching the day care home and the child because there was never time to see the children of mothers applying for day care homes. The agency felt fairly comfortable about the home study process. They felt that this day care service was different from child placing because the mother was in the picture and seemed to require little help in making arrangements for the baby. It had not seemed necessary to communicate either with the child's father or the foster mother's husband since the two women were the only ones with whom the child had contact. No agency already overtaxed and understaffed could find it possible to do more with an emergency program. It had been a considerable sacrifice to set up a separate day care office and to release two members of the staff for the new assignment. Some of the well-established procedures for home finding and placement had to be discarded. Short cuts in an emergency. There were no funds to subsidize the new service other than for payment of salaries and office rent. It had seemed better to meet the emergency need for day care this way than to watch the efforts of certain industrial personnel departments to utilize commercial day care facilities for the children of their women employees, or to accept the hazard to the community's children represented by the unlicensed independent boarding homes which advertised freely in the daily papers.

Case Work Skills in Family Day Care

The day care agency in another community receives a grant from the chest which enables the agency to subsidize the service and to offer it to many mothers who could otherwise not afford to pay the full cost. The case workers on the staff regard careful preparation of the child for placement in a day care home, which includes a thorough physical examination and a preliminary visit with the day care mother, as means by which parents and day care mothers can become more aware of the individual needs of the child and more closely related to the agency and to the workers who represent it. The fee, adjusted to parents' incomes, is not only a source of income to agency and to day care mother, but is one way in which the parents can share responsibility with agency and community for the care of their child.

Mrs. Carmen, the day care mother in whose home Mary Brown, 22 months, has been placed, feels herself a part of the agency offering this service. She is one of a number of housewives in the community who attended a preparatory training course for day care

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BULLETIN

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Henrietta L. Gordon, *Editor*

The Bulletin is in large measure a Forum for discussion in print of child welfare problems. Endorsement does not necessarily go with the printing of opinions expressed over a signature.

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Specialized Services Worth Retaining

WERE the cults of modern social work properly listed there would appear several groups honestly believing that foster care, and certainly child protective services, should be removed from their old and accustomed corporate vehicle, built for specialized service, and slipped into convenient corners of some streamlined chariot. Sometimes they will put the child in the front seat, sometimes in the back where he will be hidden among the family's necessary luggage, sometime in the hope that he may have a long nap and bother the others as little as possible.

Of course the vehicle doesn't matter so much; all of us do want a fairly up-to-date model. What does matter tremendously is whether the child gets what he needs; whether he is to profit from accumulated skills or is to be served by most anyone who has attended a school of social work.

No parent can be expected to know what it will be like for him or his child to endure the separation which follows placement for foster care. To make his decision, to avoid unnecessary emotional strain and for the help of all concerned in the adjustments necessary when a child is placed, the parent needs the counsel of a specialist in child placement. The parent need not be given a morbid review of the heartaches involved, but he, and to some extent the child, needs a clear idea of what will be required of him. The worker placing a child has responsibilities similar to those of the surgeon, who has seen the effects of the same operation on many others, who spares his patient unnecessary and gory details, but honestly shares with him an understanding of the major risks involved and the advantages probably to be gained.

Unless a worker has become experienced and thereby skilled in placement, both he and the parent will lack the perspective which will help parent and child to meet the change with confidence and resourcefulness.

The child who enters a foster home or an institution should be preceded, and then later accompanied by, one who is proved by experience in the finding of foster homes or in the interpretation of a child to the housemother in an institution. This is as important as the continuing case work supervision, and indeed provides a basis for it, in which child, parent and foster parent will feel free to share with the social worker any concerns about the new relationships. Any general practitioner who attempts such work should have had a phase of his training in foster care and have served under supervision in a good foster care agency. It is worth noting that some of the most intensive and most effective social case work in 1944 is being done within the precincts of children's institutions, where the task frequently requires enough skill to make up for the blunders of the several agencies which have failed with the child.

The children in need of protective services in wartime include many who are rejected. The rejecting parent, whether shunning his child or showering him with compensating attention, may be compared to the frightened rabbit floating on a timber down a flooded stream. He does not know how to handle himself. And how can his confused child have any sense of direction?

A few children need advocates who can step between them and a parent whose treatment of his child has become cruel, advocates whose outlook and skill permit them to bring some of these parents and children together again. A deft use of the relationship established is required for those parents whose emotional distress or immaturity leaves them too confused to make certain decisions.

As this is written, a long established children's agency is closing its doors, the community having asked other agencies to take over its load. We should be open minded as to possibilities but we vigorously hope that the child whose needs can be met only by specialized skills doesn't get lost in the back of the family car, and that if that happens the child (or his advocate) will emit a lusty squawk, testifying to the community's neglect.

HOWARD W. HOPKIRK

Shall We Build?

In a graphic report of a meeting held at St. Vincent's Orphanage, Detroit, Michigan, Sister Josephine tells in an article entitled,* "The Future of an Orphanage," how this question which has been troubling institution superintendents and boards of trustees all over the country is answered by a group of Catholic social workers and religious leaders. Here is some of their thinking.

"Funds are available; we could start the day the war ends—yet we hesitate—"

"The census of the orphanage has shown a steady decline—Why? Are there sufficient facilities for dependent and neglected girls without us?"

"Even with the regrouping of the children and the making of new recreation rooms which took some dormitory space, there is still space to spare."

They examined some of the changes in institution house plan and program. One superintendent of another institution remarked, "You are giving a superior type of service by the changes you have made. You have apartments instead of cottages. Your children are going to outside schools. You are giving them a more normal living. You could not give them a better type of service."

Then they arrived at a consideration of what needs of children are served effectively by institutions, as for example, troubled adolescents, predelinquents, who need "short time service." There was recognition that "we no longer serve orphans," whom we used to "take over for maybe ten or twelve years. . . . Way down deep in your heart . . . you realized actually some children have been there (in the orphanage) a long time." You became convinced, "Even the foster home really had a place."

The editorial comment in this issue of the Review gives the sum and substance of this discussion, "Shall We Build?"

"Our orphanages and homes are dealing more and more with children presenting special problems which can best be met by an institution. We have come to recognize that the place for the ordinary dependent child is in a home, his own home or a substitute foster home. It is now rather widely and uniformly accepted that the church cannot have a rounded program of child care without a combination of the institution and foster home."

This is in keeping with progressive thinking and planning all over the country. A recent issue of *The Federator*† reports similarly that children are remain-

ing fewer years in institutions in Allegheny County. An examination of the average length of stay in sixteen institutions serving children reveals that,

"The average length of stay for children in sixteen Allegheny County institutions has been declining steadily since 1930. In 1932 a peak was reached when an analysis showed that the average child had been institutionalized for 5.7 years.

"This change in the length of time children remain in institutions reflects the general acceptance of the philosophy that institutional life does not provide an adequate medium for the emotional development of the child. The more extensive use of foster home care as a substitute for institutional care in long time placements has contributed to the decrease both in the average length of stay in institutions and in the number of children in residences at any one time.

"The decrease in length of stay has of course been accompanied by an increase in the turnover rate of the sixteen institutions. In 1932 less than one-fifth of the institutional population was being replaced each year. In 1943, over one-third of the children were being replaced annually."

These are some facts and principles that may guide those who ask, "Shall We Build?"

READER'S FORUM

FAMILY DAY CARE

DEAR EDITOR:

I note that the lead article by Margaret E. Butcher in the November 1944 BULLETIN is entitled, "A Foster Day Care Service." The staff of the Emergency Child Care Office in Cleveland feel that a much more satisfactory term for this service is "family day care."

The staff and committee, I know, would appreciate an effort on the part of the Child Welfare League to popularize the term "family day care." They feel that this term is an accurate description of the service and readily understandable to the public. They believe the term "foster day care" connotes a parent substitute and leads parents to believe that they are talking about 24-hour care.

Perhaps this is much ado about a name, but our people feel that their experience with parents indicates that it would be much more satisfactory to get a universal acceptance among child welfare workers of the term "family day care."

—HENRY ZUCKER

Secretary, Welfare Federation of Cleveland

* The Catholic Charities Review, October 1944.

† Publication of the Federation of Social Agencies of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.

BOARD MEMBERS' COLUMN

KNOW YOUR AGENCY'S PROGRAM

As part of a general program of training, the directors of the Morris County Children's Home held an all day meeting for board members, members of the staff, chairmen and members of local chapter committees, and interested representatives of other county agencies working with children. The attendance was not as large as we had hoped, which actually was an advantage in the discussion groups.

The stated purpose of the meeting was "to acquaint those present with the work and problems of the agency and its relation to other groups interested in similar objectives." It provided an opportunity to examine our own work as one part of a larger program, all intended to improve and strengthen the lives of children.

After a brief introduction there were two talks on health, (1) "What are the health needs of children from broken homes," by a board member, and (2) "To what extent can these needs be met in Morris County," by the President of the County Tuberculosis and Health Association. There followed a presentation by the President of the Board and by a case worker of the agency of an outline of a special juvenile court project now being carried on by the Family and Children's Society. Discussion groups on these two subjects were then held under direction of two members of the Children's Home staff.

In the afternoon, the subject of foster homes was presented by a staff member responsible for that branch of the Children's Home work, and the Executive Director discussed adoptions. Discussion groups led by a staff member and a board member who is also counsel for the agency, followed these presentations.

The conclusions arrived at were summarized by the President of the Board. There can be little doubt as to the benefits derived by all those who attended, through a gain in knowledge of the broad problems of the Children's Home and specific information as to activities being carried by others. The talks were particularly notable for their lack of technical phraseology—always a desirable feature—and the discussion groups obviously wanted to continue beyond the allotted time, which is as it should be. There is a positive advantage in reviewing at frequent intervals the work of an agency in relation to and in company with other agencies of similar purpose. Not only is duplication apt to be avoided, but an agreement as to common goals may be reached. This in turn develops a group momentum which removes otherwise difficult obstacles, and promotes the harmony so essential in work of this sort.

LAWRENCE J. MACGREGOR,

President, Morris County Children's Home, Morristown, N. J.

A 16-Year Minimum Age For Employment

THE National Commission on Children in Wartime, in accordance with its Goals for Children and Youth in the Transition from War to Peace, proposes for 1945 legislative action ". . . that State child-labor laws be amended so as to provide that no minor under 16 years of age shall be employed, permitted, or suffered to work in any gainful occupation during school hours, and that no minor under 16 years of age shall be employed, permitted or suffered to work in or in connection with any manufacturing or mechanical establishment.

"To avoid any possible objection to the raising of State child-labor standards during the period of war production, when large numbers of young workers are employed, deferred effective dates might be provided. The proposed amendment might be made effective on the date of the termination of hostilities of the present war as declared by Presidential proclamation or by joint resolution of the Congress of the United States, or at an earlier date if labor requirements warrant it. The effective date should be set so as to give employers time to make necessary readjustments."

The stated purpose of the 16 year minimum standard is ". . . to give young people an opportunity to obtain at least the minimum education that is necessary for good citizenship and satisfying lives, to protect children from premature or harmful employment, and to give them opportunity for developing physically and mentally to their fullest capacity. In the post-war period, when competition for jobs will become greater, persons uneducated or physically below par will be handicapped. They may become a burden instead of an asset to themselves and the community. The need for maintaining present minimum-age standards has been given public support even during periods of peak war production when labor standards are under extreme pressure, and comparatively few modifications have occurred in pre-war minimum ages for entrance into employment.

"The inevitable reduction in manpower needs that will accompany the termination of hostilities and curtailment of war production will lessen the unprecedented demand for young workers and thus offer an unrivaled opportunity to obtain this 16-year minimum-age standard for employment. Such a standard not only will assure the youth of the country better mental and physical development but at the same time will lessen the impact of unemployment in the reconversion period by delaying the entrance of young persons into jobs."

The full statement released in November discusses in addition Amount of Employment and Effect on School Enrollments; Extent to Which Child-Labor Laws Now Establish a 16-Year Minimum Age; Proposed Standard Widely Recommended; and Related Problems. To insure intelligent support of such legislation this statement should be widely emulated.

Copies may be had for the asking.

Interpreter's Column

The contributors to this column are invited guest writers who have had experience in interpreting various aspects of social work, and in promoting sound public relations.

ON BEING CONCRETE

The newspaper writer trying to interpret a specialized field is constantly in search of the concrete.

When a specialist in child guidance said the other day, speaking of the return of fathers from the Services, "the preventive aspects of mental hygiene will be important in post-war rehabilitation in the home," I said, automatically, "In what way?"

"Well," he said, "a lot of kids are going to find a strange man in the house—someone they never saw before."

This is language I understand, and if I understand it, so does my reader.

In six years of reporting on child welfare, health, education and guidance, I have found that the expert usually talks more vividly than he writes. Some of them talk extraordinarily well, better, I think, than they know. I wish more of them would dictate their material.

Many authorities, speaking for publication, tend to wrap up their ideas in generalities, to avoid the specific. And the specific is what I want. Maybe they do this in fear of being misquoted, fear of going out on a professional limb.

I sympathize with them on both counts. A youth spent as a hired hand in scientific research left a deep imprint of respect for the professional worker, and a horror of distorting his, or her, views. This experience has its disadvantages, since my sympathies are so apt to be with the person at the other end of the interview. Years ago when doing general assignments I was sent to track down a chemist whose work in vitamin research had made a morning headline. "Find out," I was told, "how this is going to affect the family dinner table; what it means to the woman who does the marketing." I found the chemist all but cowering behind a desk, so unwilling to say anything, let alone be quoted, that at last I said it must be tough to be asked to sum up for print a lifetime of work in a highly specialized field. He stared for a few seconds, and said, "It terrifies me."

So when I ask for brief comment and illustrations in a field of great complexity, I know I am expecting a good deal. And I know how easily one can get out on a limb, with professional associates and sometimes with our readers.

A psychiatrist made a comment not long ago which I might have quoted like this, "Speaking recently at

such a meeting, Dr. So-and-So said that he has seen happy and united families in which physical punishment, even severe physical punishment, was a commonplace." Then he nervously added, "I don't think you'd better say that." I didn't think so, either. We didn't have space to amplify the comment, to explain that these particular children were surrounded by warmth, praise and consistency, etc.; and since we all pick out of our reading the things we look for, I could see some harassed parent picking out the phrase on physical punishment, endorsed by Dr. So-and-So, and exclaiming, "It says right here in the paper we ought to beat Willie." Every reader of the Bulletin knows better than I that what parents want to know is what to do when . . .

Over and over they are told that there are no rules, that it is not what they do but the way they feel that gets across to a child; that it isn't what they say, but how they feel when they say it. Nevertheless a child keeps hopping out of bed, grabbing toys, telling lies, and parents still ask what to do. I don't know that anyone can blame them. Their own parents knew what to do. When Johnny said a bad word his mouth was washed out with soap and water. Many of us were brought up on rules, by people who knew exactly what was right and fitting, and some of us, in perplexity, might turn with relief to the answers in the back of the book, if there were any answers any more.

I think that parents could be helped over this hurdle if the counsel given could be illustrated. Workers in allied fields must have countless examples to pass along. Off-hand I think of one about the understanding foster mother who didn't force affection on a homesick child, but went on rolling cookies and baked him a gingerbread man.

The thing one mother does with one child won't apply to every child, but it seems to me that by illustrating a great many kindly, sensible ways of dealing with children we also illustrate the feelings involved, and that this helps parents to get the point.

For my purposes the concrete example does more than sharpen the focus. It saves space. The writer for a professional journal may develop his ideas in two or three thousand words. The reporter must digest the article and try to convey its essence in at most a few hundred words, maybe fifty words. Every week I lose valuable material because I haven't time to read it carefully and boil it down.

It is wonderful to have 800 words for a piece and not have to boil it down!

CATHERINE MACKENZIE,
Editor, "Parent and Child," New York Times Magazine

The Child Welfare Field

(Continued from page 4)

and the development of new services, both within and without the social work field. It facilitates co-operation within the child welfare field and outside, by defining the specific nature, the differences and the boundaries of its parts, in terms of concrete problems, specific processes and tested methods.

A significant illustration both of the difficulty and the value of this kind of clarification and definition of problem and service has been afforded recently in the day nursery. The day nursery was long regarded in a half-hearted sort of way as a social agency. But for most of its long career it was largely untouched by modern currents of development in technical methods of social work. This was because we had never really identified in it the problems and processes to which social work, as such, was applicable, as differentiated from those that demanded another kind of knowledge and skill. Hence, we could not mark off an area where our special skill and understanding, in helping children and parents to deal with the social problems in their lives together and during separation, were actually required and could be acquired and used. Slowly, under the pressure of this emergency, we have found a new relation to these problems and these services. We have found our own specific part in the process, and so we have discovered a new basis of sound and fruitful collaboration, as a part of a larger whole, in which medicine, nursing, education, group work and case work, by uniting their differences, have created a new and exceedingly valuable entity in the total community program for children.

The institution is another illustration of the same original confusion, only now beginning to yield to dawning discrimination of the different technical elements involved in it. This, too, was assumed to be a social agency, in a vague sort of way. It was at first embraced by us, then spurned, as a potential instrument of real social service, always in a wholesale, haphazard, impulsive fashion. It was only when we began to break it down into its parts, to relate those parts to specific problems of children, and so to discover the specific skills which those parts required, that we began to make discriminating professional use of this ancient agency. We began to see here, too, a combination of services related to specific problems—health, education, group activity, individual adjustment—as we began to admit, to exclude, to discharge and to readmit children to institutions on a flexible, considerate basis, according to the problems they presented and the needs they felt. And so we

began to discover and to augment the specific contribution we could make to many a complicated situation in which children were involved.

Cooperation In Defining Areas of Responsibility

It is evident that the same situations and experiences also point up the importance of the second task of the child welfare field—the task of cooperation. I have been immensely interested in hearing of the efforts the Child Welfare League of America has been making to perfect its understanding with the family field, for instance, as to the areas of differentiation and likeness, of separateness and overlapping, and as to the means of staking out and exploring those areas of practice where confusion in definition of individual or joint responsibility still remains. There must be more of this kind of inquiry and experimentation, on the local as well as the national levels. But it must be pointed out, too, that in the final analysis, the value of this kind of joint exploration and cooperation is going to depend upon the degree to which each co-operator becomes increasingly clear as to his own special fitness and as to his own focal area of service. Each must bring his own defined difference to the council table. Only then can the gaps, as well as the conflicts, come to view, and only then will a basis of collaboration be disclosed which adequately brings to the service of the community the insight and skill which is derived from intensive, specialized experience. There are vast opportunities awaiting such cooperation all down the line, between case work and group work; between medical care and social care, between education and social work; between social service agencies and agencies of social planning and social action on a wider scale.

We have a right to expect of the child welfare field light and leading in this direction, for of all the field of social work with which I am acquainted, it starts today with the soundest, clearest concept of its problem, the most clear-cut definition of its function, the most far-reaching need for unified collaboration with other types of social help.

The Community Must Know About Children and Their Needs

The two additional tasks for which we must hold the child welfare field in social work especially responsible are probably equally pressing. The first is the grave obligation to tell what it has learned about children and their needs. It is time that some one with the authority of genuine experience and achievement in this field should speak up steadily, firmly,

insistently, to the community, in behalf of considerate regard for the individual child's place in the community's problems. I need not expatiate upon the amount of loose, impulsive talk that is being broadcast about juvenile delinquency and its treatment. And we can refer to it without the slightest disrespect for the genuine concern felt by representatives of public opinion and public authority about the changes which have come over youth's world in this emergency, and about the reactions of youth to the new elements of freedom, of tension, of anxiety and of conflict in his life. But I long to hear the calm, steadfast, informed voice of the child welfare field in social work amid this uproar, bringing the individual child to view as he is, at the center of the whole exciting picture. I crave a sound, discriminating exposition of the part that increased environmental outlets of constructive energy at work and at play can and cannot play in meeting these issues; the gaps which these still leave, which can only be filled by wise, skillful, individual help of youth in making his own use of these opportunities.

For it is not merely more boys' clubs, more teenage canteens, more supervised street dances, that are going to meet this problem. It is rather the kind of leadership and help which goes into these and all other aspects of his life, that will count the most. It is the flexible, individualized adaptation of mass measures and external opportunities to the internal individual interests and needs of each one, which is the real basis of hope for helping youth to find its way through its present difficulties. Somehow, each must be helped to accept his own responsibility for making something of his own life. There speaks out of the best practice in the child welfare field this sensitive appreciation of individual difference, this sincere respect for the individual's own concept and use of his own life. It is just that which must find its way into the channels of community thinking and planning. With it, for instance, a day care program becomes something more than safe custody, service fees and statistics; adoption is something more than a convenience, a legal proceeding for the satisfaction of an adult's need; foster home care is something more than food and shelter—all because, at the center of the program, is a convincing and compelling sense of an individual child, in an individual family, with his own life to lead, his own emotional ties, his own innate capacities, his own will and purpose.

There Must Be Action

But talk, of course, is cheap. Action is difficult and risky. The final task of the child welfare field is vigorous, steady participation, in collaboration with all other forces of the community—social, civic, economic, political—to bring to realization those plans and policies which embody the truly vital needs of children, for opportunity, for protection and for constructive help. I have been impressed with the recent report of a meeting of the Board of the Child Welfare League of America, which was devoted to assessing this organization's responsibility for dynamic participation in public action affecting children. There are fabulous projects in the offing. What they become, whether they are to be only superficial, temporary responses to obvious external needs, or whether they are to carry in themselves the essential inner quality of insight, understanding and democratic feeling which will translate them into really dynamic factors in the lives of America's children—all this depends, upon how the child welfare field of social work finds the power and the zeal to put into their making.

This means risking one's self, at times, in the heat of controversy, and this takes rare clarity of conviction and steadfast courage. It requires, above all, the application of a deep professional integrity and skill in the handling of one's self in conflict to these wider relations of the child welfare field. It is difficult and perilous, but it is a part of the price we pay for our right to accept a degree of responsibility for ourselves as social workers and for those whose interests are entrusted in part to our care.

If here, as in every other professional relationship, we can be firm but not stubborn, self-confident but not bigoted, helpful but not intrusive; if we act as consistently as we talk with appreciation of another's right to be different and to maintain his difference; if we recognize the community's right to govern and determine its own life; if we can be a part and not need to be the whole—then the risks of commitment to action will dwindle and the satisfactions of community collaboration will mount. In the end, we shall discharge to the full the obligation we owe to the children whom we serve, to the community in which they and we both live, and to those universal and permanent human values to which the child welfare field, and the whole of social work, has long dedicated its sturdy faith and its growing strength.

Manuals and Forms for Home Finding

THE general scarcity of foster homes and home finding campaigns bring to the League many questions as to how foster homes should be studied and how they can be developed into greater usefulness. A newly organized committee, originally set up to study the value of foster parent manuals, met this month to consider printed material and forms that may help in the process by which applicants for a child for boarding care become foster parents who can meet the needs of children and work with an agency.

Beginning at the point of first application, the use and content of the application form are seen as both an expression of agency policy and a determinant of what will continue to take place. The form now issued by the Child Welfare League of America is felt to be outdated, chiefly because it attempts to obtain in a form expression of attitudes and motives that best come out of discussion in the application interview.

Recommendations for revision are on the basis that the application should ask only for that factual information and identifying data which are needed to help the agency come to the initial decision of whether applicants meet certain agency requirements, and to convey to the applicants what the agency expects in the way of such requirements, so that they can decide if they wish to continue with a home study. The actual filling out of the form would then serve as a confirmation of this mutual decision, and should therefore follow an application interview where questions can be discussed.

The use of an outline form for the study of the home is generally found to be inadequate. However it is recognized that the study of a home must have certain content, as well as process, as a basis for the agency and prospective foster parent to decide whether they can work together. The old topical type of history cannot give the changing picture of the applicant as she begins to understand what it is to be a foster parent, nor of what she can reveal of herself and her life experience as an indication of what she has to give to a child.

The content of a home study must be such as to clarify for the applicant what she needs to know about agency procedures and the kind of children available, that is, what is involved in being a foster parent. It must enable the agency and applicant to see what it is in her own life, her own family relationships, her attitudes towards religion, health, education, that would make it possible for her to understand and to care for a child who is not her own, and

share with the agency and own parents. How she has come to the agency, what she sees as involved in taking a child, what it will mean to her and her family give further understanding of what satisfactions she may need to get in being a foster parent.

A foster parent manual is thought to have value as a reference when the home has been accepted for use, to confirm for foster parents what they can expect of the agency and what will be expected of them in regard to certain specific, defined agency procedures and policy.

The committee is working on the revision of the application blank, on a manual suggesting content of a foster home study including a form for evaluation, and on a manual for foster parents.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

NEW MENTAL-HEALTH PROGRAM IN THE CHILDREN'S BUREAU*

As a step toward meeting the mental-health needs of children on a broad and comprehensive basis, a new mental-health program has been established in the Children's Bureau. With the absence from home of thousands of men and women in the military service, with the migration of millions to war industrial centers, and with the increased mobility of the population in general, family life has been disturbed and broken up, and children are losing the security and stability that a strong family unit gives. The Bureau finds it of the greatest importance to give attention to the mental and emotional problems of children at this time and is mobilizing its resources to meet the growing need for a program dealing with such problems, which become more evident as the strain of war increases.

The new program will encourage the incorporation of sound projects of mental health as an integral part of the general child-health and child-welfare programs and the development of adequate treatment resources for children who are emotionally disturbed, maladjusted, psychotic, or mentally deficient.

The broad outlines of the program will be planned by a committee, of which the chairman is the Chief of the Bureau. The members of the Children's Bureau staff assigned to the mental-health work will be Dr. Martha W. MacDonald, psychiatric services adviser; Elsa Castendyck, consultant in social service; and Sybil Stone, psychologist.

* N.B.—See Dr. MacDonald's statement on Mental Hygiene in the Child Health Conference reported in *The Child*, August 1944.

The Children in Day Time Care

(Continued from page 7)

mothers. She has helped to recruit several neighbors to participate in the agency's program and cooperates intelligently with the day care worker in handling problems which arise in relation to the child's adjustment, physical needs and the parent's use of the service. Miss Blaine, the worker, expects her to use judgement in calling such problems to the agency's attention and Mrs. Carmen looks forward to her visits which occur every other month. There are occasional telephone conferences and letters. A regular fee is paid to her by the agency on a monthly basis. The mother, Mrs. Brown feels free to discuss financial problems with Miss Blaine when an increase or decrease of income indicates an adjustment of the amount she pays to the agency for Mary's care.

Mrs. Brown, a widow, is an inspector in a war plant manufacturing airplane parts. Her job is essential both from her own and the Government's point of view. Mary's happy adjustment in the foster home, the excellent care she receives, the assurance of the day care agency's interest in Mary's placement, their willingness to discuss any problem, their readiness to help meet emergencies—all these are factors in Mrs. Brown's star record as a war worker. The shop supervisor understands the occasional irregularity of her work schedule. Miss Blaine from the day care agency has had several talks with the personnel department explaining the two-day delay in reporting back for work, when the placement was first arranged. It is necessary, she said, for a mother to be present when the child first visits a foster day home just as it is when the pre-placement physical examination is being made. She further explained that there would be less reason for absenteeism if Mrs. Brown were fully satisfied before resuming work that the plan for Mary's care is all right for her.

This agency believes that an important part of its function is the interpretation to industry of its service and the needs of children of working mothers. Close relations with a number of personnel departments and union representatives have been established. This has enabled the agency to help mothers arrange necessary work adjustments and to make better day care plans for their children.

Case Work Skills in Group Care

A center for pre-school children has been expanded to include a program for children of school age. Both departments are operated in one large building situated in the congested residential area where the Gallaghers make their home.

Both parents of Tom Gallagher, 9, and his 3-year-

old sister Susie are employed in the same aircraft plant. Mr. Gallagher works on the night shift and Mrs. Gallagher on the early day shift. The mother leaves home at 6:30 in the mornings while the children and their father are still in bed. The problems of Tommie's preparing breakfast and supervision of Susie, a minor street accident and the father's broken sleep were solved by admission of both children to the child care center. Mrs. Gallagher had often heard her neighbors speak with enthusiasm of "the nursery" but had no experience of her own with this type of agency. She was reluctant to request such service until she became increasingly aware of it through conversations with fellow workers, advertising posters on the union bulletin board and several articles with pictures appearing in the local newspaper. She took both children with her to the Center office, expecting to have them admitted the following day.

The following picture is drawn from the children's reaction to the new experience:

Tommie sensed the tension in his mother's voice when she explained the urgency of making an immediate plan for him and Susie. It made him feel better when the young woman behind the desk pulled two small chairs forward, gave him a book, and allowed Susie to inspect the toy shelf, pictures and the contents of a waste basket at will. At home later, he heard mother tell father that you can't hurry up a plan to have children enter in the Center over night. "Those people are careful. They make appointments for the youngsters to see the nursery doctor before they let them in and afterward the children have a chance to visit with the teachers and the other children so they'll know what it is all going to be like." When father said a little crossly, "Don't the nursery know you have a job and can't wait for all that?" mother explained that at first she had felt that way too and was upset because they didn't seem to understand; but the worker in the office helped her see it would be much better for the children not to hurry, and to make sure with the doctor and the teacher that the plan will be all right for them. She thought the charge was fair, seeing that she and father were both working and could afford to pay almost the entire cost. Mother said this proudly as though she felt pleased to be getting something nice for him and Susie. Tommie interrupted to ask about school next week, and why he needed to go to the Center at all. He could look out for himself after breakfast and after three when school is over. "What do the kids my age do there anyway?" he questioned almost tearfully. Mother said he'd soon find out there is plenty to do, and it would take a load off her mind and father's to know that the teachers supervise a two-hour play period in the mornings and see the older boys and girls off to school in time. The ones whose fathers or mothers are working on the night shift can get breakfast there too.

The next days were a rush of new experiences for Tom and Susie. First there was the half hour with the Center doctor, a nice woman who wore every day clothes like the teachers, and let Tommie weigh himself. She was good to Susie when she got scared for a moment and cried. Mother was there and soon she and the doctor were talking together like old friends. The office lady was there too. She showed mother the charts where the Center keeps a record of the weight of all the boys and girls. They are weighed every month and measured every six months. They all see the doctor twice a year and more often if they need to: Tommie thought he wouldn't mind that. He liked the way she told him what a fine straight back he has. Susie's tonsils should come out. Mother said she would take a week off in the spring and see that this is done.

The next day father took Tom and Susie to the Center for a visit in the afternoon. Mother came in time to watch them play, and both mother and dad had a long talk with the office lady. Tom's teacher took him out to the yard. Soon he was climbing the jungle gym with two new friends. There were wagons and skates and downstairs in the recreation room a big work bench with tools. Some of the boys were making furniture for the girls' doll house and the girls were painting it.

Susie was led away from daddy crying. The teacher soon picked her up and carried her about the big room upstairs showing her the blocks and the dolls and some of the children's paintings. Susie saw these things through a blur of tears. The teacher's voice was soft and her arms strong and warm. After a while she put Susie down on the floor where she sat watching the block building. Another little girl gave her a doll to hold. They had milk and a cookie together. Then mother and daddy came and stood in the doorway. Susie rushed to them. They held out their arms and came in to say goodbye to the teacher.

The following day and the next were full of learning where to hang hats and coats, how to stand while the morning teacher examined all the children as they came in, how to get ready for lunch. Daddy called for Susie immediately afterward and took her home to wait for mother. The other children stayed at the center for naps and afternoon play. On the second day Susie announced she wanted to stay too. The office lady smiled and said she could. There were no tears when daddy left her the third morning. Susie felt full of importance and pride in her new found independence. Tommie hugged her and rushed downstairs to join the other boys. Teacher told daddy that she was eating well and that she would need a pair of bedroom slippers for nap time.

At home, when supper was on the table the four Gallagher's discussed activities at the Center. It seemed an important undertaking in their lives, in which each had a part and each part fitted together to make a whole. Even Susie could feel that, even though she didn't express it as clearly as Tommie, who said, "I thought going to a nursery would be sissy, but it's swell fun. It's more fun at home too, now."

Throughout the ensuing year there were numerous contacts with these parents. Teachers' progress records show that both children have made good adjustments within their groups and considerable gains in ability and initiative. These gains and the children's problems as well, have been shared with the parents by the teachers and the case worker.

If we have a clear understanding of the needs of children, which include the need to belong to their parents, to learn and to grow and to develop, we recognize that a day care program must not only supplement home life but must provide a well balanced, substitute experience. In order to protect the physical, and emotional life of every individual child while separated from home, three basic skills are essential. These are medical, health, educational and case work, none of which are dispensable. If we are aware that family unity may be strained to the breaking point by the parents' burden of two jobs, one at home and the other at work, then we may have strong conviction that a high quality is essential in any service offered to children, who require care away from home during the day. Such a conviction will not allow us to compromise with the kind of emergency planning for children which affords inadequate protection of their health, safety, and future development, and the kind which fails to operate in close relationship with their parents. We must and can redirect our efforts to organize and administer day care service with children as the central focus, even at this late date.

All of us are acutely aware of the lack of available, trained professional and domestic personnel, the difficulty in recruiting family day care homes, the scarcity of suitable buildings and equipment, and the difficulty of procuring sufficient funds. I venture to say that the greatest lack of all is our lack of conviction as to what children need and must have in order to know the fullness of life, and a steadfast refusal on our part to provide less than is required to make it possible.

Mrs. Turitz Rejoins League Staff

MRS. ZITHA TURITZ returned to the staff of the Child Welfare League in October available for part-time service only. She has returned to work similar to what she was doing when she resigned in 1940 when she was in charge of our publications. She is assisting Mrs. Henrietta L. Gordon, Secretary for Publications and Information, whose overload has reached proportions requiring the time of more than one member of the professional staff. The League is fortunate to regain the services of Mrs. Turitz whose ability and previous acquaintance with the League are obvious assets.

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